English 419: Multimedia Writing

Term: Fall 2003
Days/Times: TTh 3:00-4:15pm
Location: HEAV 227

Instructor Information

Dr. Jennifer Bay
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Office Hours: TTh 9:30-11am and by appointment

Course Description

English 419 introduces students to the fundamental rhetorical theories, principles, and practices of multimedia design, implementation, and publishing. The main objective for the course is for students to understand critical theories of multimedia and the new media technologies that create and publish multimedia content, with a particular emphasis on visual rhetoric and usability. Since multimedia is, by nature, interactive, we will cover the rhetorical nature of interactivity, the relationship of the audience—or users—to interactivity, and the discovery of innovative methods for successfully interacting with others through multimedia. Students will explore these theories through projects that require creative engagements with a variety of technologies and users.

Required Texts

Krug, Steve. *Don't Make Me Think! A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability.* Indianapolis, IN: New Riders, 2000.
Digital course packet (DCP) and various online readings (online)

Evaluation

Portfolio	60%
Online writing/participation	20%
In class and group participation	20%

Portfolio

This class uses the portfolio method of assessment to evaluate student performance. The portfolio method is a process whereby students extensively develop, revise, and edit a variety of projects during the course. Throughout the semester, students submit full drafts of their projects to the instructor and to class peers, who provide constructive feedback, suggestions, and commentary for further revision. Formal grades are not assigned on these drafts. Rather, students have the opportunity to revise their work using those comments and suggestions. At the end of the course, students submit their revised projects in a portfolio that represents their best work. These portfolios are evaluated holistically, meaning that the work is assessed as a whole rather than as individual pieces. The purpose of this method of assessment is to allow students to focus intensely on improving their writing and critical thinking skills without an emphasis on letter grades or rankings. If you are concerned about your standing in the course, please make an appointment to discuss your work with me. Also, you must complete all of the assignments in order to pass the course.

Participation

Participation includes active and constructive involvement in class discussions, electronic and face-to-face (F2F), as well as being prepared for class by doing the assigned reading and writing assignments. If it becomes necessary for me to hold students accountable for the readings, we will periodically have pop reading quizzes, which will figure into participation grades. Participation also includes active and constructive involvement in peer groups, peer review sessions, turning in projects to group members for feedback, giving effective feedback on projects, and learning to work diplomatically with others to achieve common goals. Since this course includes collaboration, please become familiar with some of the principles of collaboration contained in the brochure, Group Work and Collaborative Writing <http://www-honors.ucdavis.edu/vohs/index.html>.

Late Work

Simply put, I do not accept late work. I expect all work to be completed by the beginning of the class period on which it is due.

Attendance

Attendance is required at all scheduled electronic and face-to-face (F2F) meetings. You are allowed three absences, no questions asked. For each class absence over three, your final grade will be lowered by one letter grade. More than six absences will result in a failing grade for the course. You are responsible for obtaining all information about missed class meetings from a classmate and for submitting work on time. Additionally, excessive tardiness will not be tolerated. Three tardies equals one absence. If you enter the class more than 30 minutes late, you will be counted absent.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is a serious crime. If you are suspected of academic dishonesty, you may be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students to receive disciplinary action. Forms of academic dishonesty include: Collusion - lending your work to another person to submit as his or her own; Fabrication - deliberately creating false information on a works cited page; and Plagiarism - the presentation of another person's work as your own, whether intentional or not. Please read and familiarize yourself with Purdue's student guide to academic integrity located at: <http://www.purdue.edu/odos/administration/integrity.htm>.

Technology Requirements

Because much of the exchange of information and materials in this class will be electronic, familiarity with certain technologies is crucial for participation and success in the course. If you need any assistance now or at any point during the semester, please do not hesitate to ask. Very early in the semester, you will need to make sure that you can meet the following responsibilities:

> - Have access to your Career Account.
> - Set up your @purdue.edu email address and regularly check your email.
> - Become proficient with sending and receiving email attachments, resolving file compatibility issues, and following email decorum.
> - Send email messages to the class list and post to the class weblog.
> - Check the course calendar before the beginning of each class.
> - Become more proficient with unfamiliar computer technologies and applications that are essential to professional writing.
> - Maintain back-up copies of all assignments via your home directory, disks, and/or email attachments to yourself.

General Course Policies

> - Come to class prepared to engage with the assigned readings, course concepts, class peers, and instructor. This can best be accomplished by completing assignments **before** the beginning of class.
> - Please respect your peers and your instructor by actively listening and paying attention. This means that unless we are using the computers during a class activity, students should be facing the instructor, other students, or whoever has the floor and is speaking.
> - Please do not talk or type while others (students or instructor) are speaking to the class. This is especially applicable when other students ask questions of the instructor.
> - Printing while one of your peers or your instructor is speaking will result in your final grade being reduced by one full letter grade.
> - Remember to save all of your files with the file extension and with no spaces in the file name.
>   Correct: smithproj1.doc
>   Incorrect: smith project 1
> - Remember to bring your texts to class with you and remember to print copies of all documents (drafts, electronic and online readings, etc) **before** class begins.
> - If you have a university-recognized disability that requires an accommodation, please see me privately within the first week of class to make arrangements.

Course Calendar, Version 1.0

This is a preliminary calendar for the first week of class.

Date			Class Meeting	For Next Class Meeting
T	Aug	26	Introductions and overview of course Complete student information sheet	Read Covino/Joliffe, "What is Rhetoric?" (DCP)
Th	Aug	28	Discussion of rhetorical theories Overview of Project #1	Read Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (online)
T	Sept	2	Application of Benjamin to multimedia Introduction to weblog writing	